

India has achieved historic achievements

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INVC NEWS New Delhi, The President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind presented the “National Award for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan)-2017” at a function organized by Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment on the occasion of International Day of Persons with Disabilities here today. On this occasion, Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment, Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot, Minister of States for Social Justice and Empowerment, Shri Krishan Pal Gurjar and Shri Ramdas Athawale also graced the occasion. On International Day of Persons with Disabilities i.e. 3rd December, the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment presents National Awards to Individuals, Institutions, Organisations, State/District etc for their outstanding achievements and work done towards empowerment of Persons with Disabilities. The National Awards were presented in 14 main categories. Within stipulated date, out of these 14 categories, 984 applications were received from 13 categories. Four Scrutiny Committees constituted by the Department as per the rules had scrutinized the nominations and their recommendations were considered by the National Selection Committee. The National Selection Committee met on 10th and 16th November and recommended 52 persons / institutions for the awards. Addressing the gathering, the President said that the future of the country depends on ensuring all citizens have the capacity to realise their full potential. To achieve this goal, we have to create a sensitive and harmonious society, where every person feels empowered - and a society of empathy, where one person feels the pain of another. He said that our Constitution guarantees equality, freedom, justice and dignity to all citizens, including the Divyang. The Government has enacted laws for the empowerment, inclusion and mainstreaming of differently-abled persons. No Divyang person should be evaluated by his or her physical ability, but by his or her intellect, knowledge and courage. The President congratulated the award winners and said he was optimistic they would inspire other differently-abled persons to strive to reach new heights. He also expressed confidence that citizens of our country will build an inclusive New India, with an appropriate and sensitive approach to our Divyang fellow Indians. In his address, Shri Thaawar Chand Gehlot said that India has achieved historic achievements during past three and half years and many Guinness Book World Records have been established by our Divyangjans. 8589 ADIP camps were organized and more than 9 lakhs Divyangjans have been provided Equipments and Assistive devices and 4000 Motorized Tricycles have also been provided. During the same period, the amount of scholarships and aids to Divyangjans have also been raised. He opined that Divyangjans are very talented. In the field of Sports, they have made remarkable achievements. He called upon people to actively participate in the propagation and publicity of several useful schemes of the government meant for Divyangjans. Under the able guidance of the Prime Minister, the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has become popular worldwide. According to Census 2011, there are 2.68 crore persons with disabilities in our country who exhibit great diversity in terms of quantum of disability as well as types of disabilities. To give focussed attention to the schemes and programmes for empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, a new Department under the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment came into existence during the year 2012. Since then, a number of new schemes and programmes for the empowerment of persons with disabilities have been added. On the other hand, the financial outlay for the department is also going up every year. The existing schemes of the department have been reviewed and in case of many modifications have been made. Receiving of applications under two major scheme is on-line and the same are processed, funds sanctioned through the electronic mode. The history of National Awards goes back to 1969, when Awards in only two categories were instituted by the Government of India

with the objective to focus public attention on issues concerning persons with disabilities and to promote their mainstreaming in society. The National Awards for empowerment of persons with disabilities have been notified in the year 2013. Now there are 14 broad categories for individuals and institutions consisting of 58 awards. This year, an advertisement was issued by the Department in July 2017 with the last date up to 15th August. However, on receipt of representations the last date was extended up to 10th September. 984 applications were received which were shortlisted by Four screening committees constituted for the purpose. The National Selection Committee met on two dates i.e. 10th November, and 16th November, 2017 to finalise the list. This year, 52 awards to individuals and institutions are being conferred. The awards consist of a certificate to each, and medal or shield in some categories as also with cash component amounting to Rs. 43.50 Lakhs.

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